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Altogether, one lays down the volume with the wish that the appointment of a royal commission had not been forestalled.

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Fluctuation of the Populations during the World War. I. Germany and France. Bulletin of the Society for the Study of the Social Consequences of the War, No. 3. (Copenhagen: Selskabet for Social Forsken af Krigens Folger. 1917. Pp. 141.)

This bulletin deserves notice out of proportion to its size, not only because of the interest and importance of its subject, but also because it is the only serious attempt in English, with the exception of Nixon's article in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* for July, 1916, to estimate the vital ravages of the war on the basis of the fragmentary official statistics as yet available. The authors had at their disposal: for France, only certain official returns for Paris and nine or ten towns, covering part of 1916 and meager data for seventy-seven *departements* reaching to only half of 1915; and for Germany, official returns of birth and death rates for towns of over 15,000 population to May, 1916, and data for Saxony to the end of 1915. The losses for France are thus largely a matter of guesswork, while those of Germany for the past year and a half are forecast on the estimated losses of the Empire up to May, 1916. The estimates for France are thus not comparable in value to those for Germany.

The main conclusions for Germany are sufficiently startling despite the fact that they are made with due scientific caution and allowance. The number of living births in 1915 was 23 per cent, and in 1916, 40 per cent less than in 1913 (calendar years). The first twelve months of the war shows a decline of 10 per cent, and the second twelve months a decline of 36 per cent, compared with the year ending July 31, 1914 (towns only). Estimates of three years' losses are as follows:

The number of living births in 1913 was 1,838,750.

LOSS IN NUMBER OF LIVING BIRTHS, COMPARED WITH BIRTHS IN 1913.

	Number	Per cent
May, 1915-May, 1916.....	662,000	36
May, 1916-May, 1917.....	827,400	45
May, 1917-May, 1918.....	992,900	54
Total loss for three years.....	2,482,300	

Allowing for the normal decline in the birth rate in the years preceding the war, the direct effects of three years of war will mean a loss of about 2,380,000 births.

Turning to deaths we find that in 1913 the number for the German Empire was 1,004,950. For three successive calendar years, the estimated numbers, including soldiers, are as follows:

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DEATHS, COMPARED WITH DEATHS IN 1913.

Year	Number	Increase over 1913	
		Number	Per cent
1914.....	1,235,950	231,000	23
1915.....	1,452,950	448,000	44.5
1916.....	1,330,950	326,000	32

For "war years," the increase was 38 per cent in 1914-15 and 32 per cent in 1915-16. (Data for towns only.) In the towns an excess of births over deaths of 272,000 in 1913 and 200,000 in 1914 is turned into a deficit of 34,000 in 1915. The estimated deficit for the Empire in 1915 is 227,000. Infant mortality shows some increase in 1914, but a decline of 22 per cent in 1915. This, of course, is a decline in the *number* of infant deaths, due to the great fall in the number of births.

The estimated total loss of population, due to increase of deaths and decline of births, is, to the end of 1916, 2,900,000, and for three years of war, 3,700,000. Three years' loss for France is put at 2,200,000.

Data and estimates on causes of death, death by sex and age, and effect of the war on age and sex constitution are given.

It is the authors' opinion—well founded, I believe—that the birth rate will not return to normal after the war.

This bulletin will of course have to be superseded by other studies when the war closes and as soon as more adequate data are available, but in the meantime it is as welcome as its disclosures are appalling. Forthcoming studies on the other chief belligerent countries are promised. The present work must be used with caution, not only because of the uncertainty and incompleteness of the data but also because the arrangement shows signs of the pressure of war time and because the quaint English into which the translator has turned the original German text does not always contribute to clearness.

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